



***United States Attorney  
District of New Jersey***

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**FORMER LABOR UNION BUSINESS MANAGER SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR  
FRAUD CONSPIRACY THAT STOLE JOBS FROM UNION MEMBERS**

NEWARK, N.J. – A former New Jersey labor union business manager was sentenced today to 33 months in prison for conspiring with others to bypass deserving union members to provide jobs to friends and criminal associates, U.S. Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Michael Urgola, 50, of Clifton, N.J. – the former business manager of Local 1153 of the Laborers' International Union of North America based in Essex County, N.J. – previously pleaded guilty before United States District Court Judge Stanley R. Chesler to a count of wire fraud conspiracy charged in the Indictment against him. Judge Chesler also imposed the sentence today in Newark federal court.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court:

Urgola admitted that between January 2006 and November 2007, he conspired with Andrew Merola, one of the Gambino Crime Family's highest ranking members in New Jersey; Ralph Cicalese, a top Gambino Associate; and others to defraud Local 1153 of its property – namely, of union membership cards issued to persons not entitled to journeyman membership in the union.

As a result of the scheme, Urgola's friends and criminal associates were given jobs they would otherwise not have been able to get – receiving work referrals ahead of other employees and Local 1153 members waiting their turn on the union's out-of-work list.

Urgola admitted that as a result of the fraud, union members were deprived of between \$400,000 and \$1 million in lost wages and benefits.

In addition to the prison term, Judge Chesler sentenced Urgola to three years of supervised release and a \$10,000 fine.

In sentencing Urgola, Judge Chesler said, "your sentence is the minimum necessary to show the next business manager of a union local that you can't do what you did."

U.S. Attorney Fishman credited special agents with the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Michael B. Ward, in Newark; and the New York Regional Office of the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, under the direction of Assistant Inspector General for Labor Racketeering and Fraud Investigations, Thomas F. Farrell, with the

investigation leading to today's sentence.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Bohdan Vitvitsky of the United States Attorney's Office Criminal Division in Newark.

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Defense counsel: Henry E. Klingeman, Esq., Newark